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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 003077

SIPDIS

TREASURY FOR A/S QUARLES, DAS RADELET
NSC FOR GARY EDSON, CLAY LOWERY
STATE FOR U/S LARSON, A/S WAYNE, A/S BURNS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/10/2007

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SUBJECT: JORDANIAN MINISTERS SEEK WASHINGTON MEETINGS ON
DEBT

Classified By: Ambassador Edward W. Gnehm. Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

1. (sbu) Planning Minister Bassem Awadallah called the Ambassador late Sunday, June 9, to say that Prime Minister Abul Ragheb had asked that he go to Washington at the end of this week with Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mohammed Halaiah. Awadallah hopes to join Halaiah (who has been invited separately to address an Inter-American Development Bank conference) in meetings with U.S. officials to renew discussions begun during King Abdullah's visit last month of Jordan's request for Paris Club debt relief. They will be in Washington on Thursday and Friday, June 13 and 14. The Jordanian embassy should be in touch to arrange appointments at State, Treasury, and the NSC.

2. (c) This is part of a pre-IMF Board meeting push by the GOJ to gain Paris Club members' support for the stock of debt "reprofiling" they are seeking from the Paris Club. The King and/or senior ministers will also be going to London, Berlin, Vienna, Rome and Tokyo before the end of the month. We have been candid in explaining to senior Jordanians, including Awadallah and Halaiah, as well as the King, the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister Muasher, and Finance Minister Marto, that hopes for such a treatment are unrealistic. Nonetheless, these senior officials continue believe that if they remain persistent, they will be able to overcome Paris Club members' objections. To bolster their economic case, the Finance Ministry has used updated projections that will appear in the new IMF program papers to prepare a new financial outlook through 2007 that Halaiah and Awadallah should be ready to discuss in Washington. They should also be able to comment on at least some of the Jordanian meetings with other Paris Club members.
Gnehm